

**National Water Quality Monitoring Council**  
**Activities and Products**  
**May 2007**

**National Monitoring Conference**

The Council has sponsored five National Water Quality Monitoring Conferences where monitoring professionals can share their experiences. The Council has plans for its Sixth National Monitoring Conference to be held May 18-22, 2008, location to be decided. More information on past Conferences is available online at <http://acwi.gov/monitoring/conference/index.html>.

**National Monitoring Network**

In January 2005, the Advisory Committee on Water Information (ACWI) approved a task proposed by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) to provide advice, counsel, and recommendations that address the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy regarding the creation of a coordinated, comprehensive national water quality monitoring network. The Council's Report on the National Water Quality Monitoring Network on U.S. Coastal Waters and their Tributaries was approved by the ACWI and presented it to the requesting organizations on April 5, 2006. The report recommends regional pilots as a way to move forward to test the Network Design. The report can be found at <http://acwi.gov/monitoring/network/design/>. Three pilot studies were selected in April 2007. They are Delaware River Basin, Lake Michigan, and San Francisco Bay Area.

**State and Regional Councils**

The Council is concerned about the institutions of monitoring and the procedures they use; the way institutions interact and the needed cooperation between them. One of the most powerful mechanisms of forging institutional collaboration is through the formation of state and regional water quality monitoring councils. We are tracking the formation and progress of approximately 13 state and regional monitoring councils that are reinforcing each other's programs and reducing costs.

**Water Quality Data Elements**

The Methods and Data Comparability Board and Council, adopted a core set of water quality data elements for use in reporting the results of chemical and microbiological water-quality sampling. These were adopted after extensive working group deliberations, public meetings, and invitations to the public for comment. The Council has published Technical Report No. 3, "Water Quality Data Elements—a User's Guide" dated April 2006. The WQDE Guide is available online at [http://acwi.gov/methods/pubs/wdqe\\_pubs/wqde\\_trno3.pdf](http://acwi.gov/methods/pubs/wdqe_pubs/wqde_trno3.pdf).

**National Environmental Methods Index**

The Methods and Data Comparability Board of the Council has developed a system to distribute information about the precision, accuracy, and cost of analytic laboratory methods that can be specified in monitoring programs. The National Environmental Methods Index (NEMI) at [www.nemi.gov](http://www.nemi.gov) is a growing web-based catalog comparing the precision, accuracy, and cost of commonly needed analytical methods to facilitate their use in planning monitoring studies. A fact sheet on NEMI dated April 2006 is available at [http://acwi.gov/methods/pubs/nemi\\_pubs/nemi\\_fs\\_Apr06.pdf](http://acwi.gov/methods/pubs/nemi_pubs/nemi_fs_Apr06.pdf).

**Accreditation of Laboratory and Field Activities for Water Quality Monitoring**

The Methods and Data Comparability Board of the Council prepared a position paper with three recommendations:

- A comprehensive evaluation of Federal laboratory accreditation needs.
- The types of laboratory accreditation standards available and in use throughout North America.
- The types of programs currently in use to accrediting laboratories for water quality analyses.

A current fact sheet for the Accreditation of Laboratory and Field Activities for Water Quality Monitoring can be found online at [http://acwi.gov/methods/pubs/accred\\_pubs/accred\\_fs.pdf](http://acwi.gov/methods/pubs/accred_pubs/accred_fs.pdf) dated 2003. Information on these and other Council products and activities can be found on our web site at <http://acwi.gov/monitoring/>.